ACADEMIC TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT

Adobe Connect:

Introductory Guide for Meeting Hosts

eLEARNING

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Overview

Adobe Connect is web-based conferencing software used to share information and host meetings over the internet. It can be used to collaborate via chat, microphone, or webcam. Applications such as Microsoft PowerPoint can be easily shared, and entire meetings can be recorded for distribution at a later time.

Objectives

- Log into Connect and manage your account
- Create a Connect meeting
- Manage the various pods within Connect including: Chat, Notes, Attendees, and Sharing
- Enable the audio and video functions of a Connect meeting
- Make an archived recording of a meeting and share it with others

What is Adobe Connect?

Adobe Connect is a Flash-based web conferencing application used by ETSU in order to conduct synchronous online meetings and presentations. Connect allows you to meet with others online and communicate through audio and video. You can also share your desktop screen, PDF documents, PowerPoint presentations, audio, video, and much more, all without requiring any expensive software. You can also record meetings in order to share or review them later.

Adobe Connect = Macromedia Breeze

Connect was originally named Macromedia Breeze. When the Adobe Corporation purchased Macromedia, they renamed Breeze to 'Connect.' It is essentially the same software, so if you are familiar with Breeze, you are already familiar with Connect!

What is needed in Terms of Hardware and Devices?

Adobe Connect is a hosted online service provided by ETSU. We have purchased a server for Connect and made accounts available to all ETSU faculty and staff. Since the software is web-based, no software purchase is required, but you may need to procure one or more devices to communicate effectively.

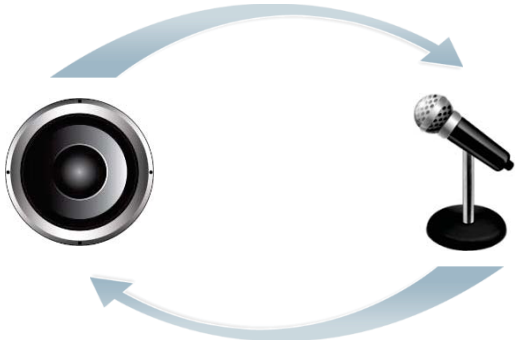
1. A computer with a high-speed connection to the internet.
2. A PC compatible microphone (Optional: only for those wishing to speak during the meeting.)
3. A web-cam (Optional: only for those wishing to be seen during the meeting.)

Once you have these items, you will want to make sure that they work prior to attending an Adobe Connect meeting. This will be your responsibility to figure out—there is such a wide variety of devices that it is difficult to

provide a step-by-step guide for every scenario. Generally, you should start by making sure that everything is properly connected, then test out your microphone and camera using either the software that came with them or your operating system's device settings.

You Should Probably Use Headphones

Using headphones can be very important, because allowing your speakers to transmit sound into your microphone can cause a variety of frustrations for everyone involved in your meeting. When someone speaks into their microphone while using Adobe Connect, their voice gets transmitted to everyone else and is output either to speakers or headphones (depending on what each person is using). If you are using speakers, then another person's voice may come out of your speakers and then right back into your microphone. This can cause echoes, or, at the very worst, a horrible, high-pitched screeching noise (feedback). To avoid this problem, *everyone* should use headphones, which will safely deliver sound to your ears without creating all of the unnecessary noise for the other meeting participants.



Exceptions and Workarounds

Wimba Classrooms

Some rooms are equipped with special hardware that can handle using speakers and microphones simultaneously. At ETSU, there are several multimedia classrooms, unofficially classified as "Wimba classrooms", which have microphones, cameras, and speakers built into the ceiling. These rooms are equipped with microphones that should ignore most sound coming from the speakers.

No Headphones Available

If you don't have headphones and you must use speakers, then do not leave your microphone on during your meeting. Rather than using 'Hands-free mode', click and hold the talk button to transmit audio only when you are speaking. This will help to avoid echoes and feedback. It's a cumbersome solution, but it can give you decent results.

Additionally, if your microphone and speakers are movable then you can try to position your microphone away from your speakers. For example, you could place the microphone close to you and position the speakers further away and point them away from the microphone. The microphone will likely still pickup sound as it bounces off the wall(s), but you may get better overall results.

Accessing Adobe Connect

Preliminary Tests

Before doing anything in Connect, it is a good idea to make sure your browsers, Flash Player version, and any needed add-ins are up to date. This is very easy to do by visiting this site:

https://admin.acrobat.com/common/help/en/support/meeting_test.htm/

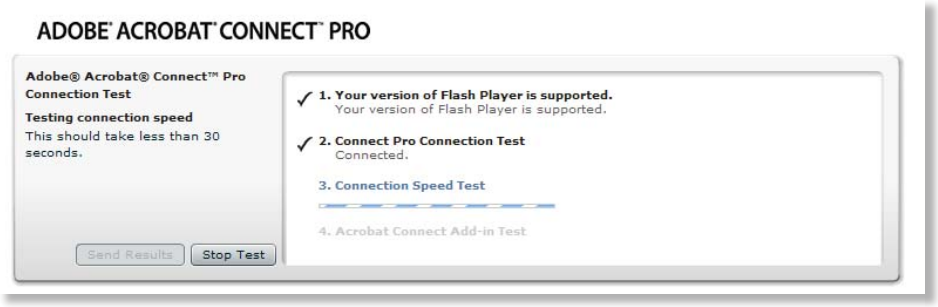

ADOBE ACROBAT CONNECT PRO
Adobe® Acrobat® Connect™ Pro Connection Test
Testing connection speed
This should take less than 30 seconds.
1. Your version of Flash Player is supported.
Your version of Flash Player is supported.
2. Connect Pro Connection Test
Connected.
3. Connection Speed Test
4. Acrobat Connect Add-in Test
Send Results
Stop Test

Figure 1

As soon as the connection test page is loaded it will begin to perform four separate automated tests. First, it will check to see if you have the Flash Player installed, and, if so, whether or not your version is supported by Adobe Connect. Second, it will attempt to make a connection to the Adobe Connect server. Third, your internet connection speed will be tested. And finally, it will check to see if the Adobe Connect Add-in is installed. If any of these tests fail then you will be provided with troubleshooting tips, or links to download the Flash Player and/or Adobe Connect add-in. Go ahead and address any of these if they appear. Once you have finished, repeat the test until you have passed all four of them. If you continue to experience issues then feel free to contact the ATS office (ats@etsu.edu).

Logging into Your Account

Before you can begin this step, you will need a username and password to log in to your account. To obtain this, contact Academic Technology (ats@etsu.edu) in order to have a username and password created.

Your Adobe Connect Account

The Connect username and password is not linked to standard ETSU username and passwords. If you lose your password or access to your account then contact the ATS office and they can either reset your password or create a new account for you.

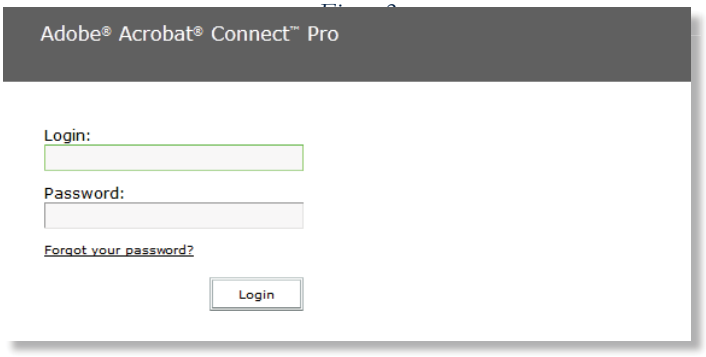
Once Academic Technology has issued the username and password, Connect can be accessed at this site: http://etsuac1.etsu.edu/. *(Note the lack of 'www' in front of 'etsuac1'—the page will not load if you attempt to use 'www' in the address).*

Which Web Browser is best?

Connect is not strictly run within a web browser, but in the Flash player. Therefore any browser which supports the Flash player should work (e.g. Internet Explorer, Firefox, Safari, Chrome, Opera, etc.). However, certain browsers have, at times, suffered compatibility issues due to the way they handle the Flash player plugin. If you are experiencing issues logging into Connect in one browser, then try another browser and see if it performs better.

Regardless of which browser you use on a regular basis, you generally ought to keep it and the Flash player updated to the latest version.

Adobe Connect Login URL: http://etsuac1.etsu.edu/



Enter the username and password provided to you by Academic Technology. Generally the username will match your ETSU email address ('lastname@etsu.edu') OR your ETSU username ('lastname'). If this is your first time logging in then you will likely be asked to change the default password to something specific to your account—go ahead and do so.

Once logged in you will be taken to the account home page where you can set up meetings and manage your account.

Changing Your Account Password

When you log in for the first time you will be prompted to create a unique password for your account. You can retrieve this password if you lose it simply by clicking the 'Forgot your password?' link on the login page. However, if you would like to change your account password then you can do so by completing the following steps:

1. Select the 'My Profile' option at the top right of the screen.
2. Select 'Change My Password' and you will see fields to type in your old password as well as your new password. (See Figure

If you ever experience trouble logging into the Adobe Connect system then please contact ATS (ats@etsu.edu | 439-8611) for assistance.

ETSU
adobe acrobat CONNECT pro
Home | Content | Meetings | Reports | Administration
My Profile | Change My Password | Edit My Preferences | Group Memberships | Organization
Change Password
Passwords must conform to the following rules:
• Passwords must be between 4 and 32 characters long.
Old Password: *
New Password: *
Retype Password: *
*- indicates required fields
Save
Cancel

Figure 3

Creating a Connect Meeting

To create a Connect meeting, log in to your Adobe Connect account (URL: http://etsuac1.etsu.edu/) and select the 'Meetings' tab at the top left of the account dashboard home screen.

This will bring up a list of meetings you have previously created (if any exist), as well as a button to create a 'New Meeting.' Folders can also be created with the 'New Folder' button in order to organize your meetings.

1. Select 'New Meeting' to start creating your meeting.

This brings us to the *Enter Meeting Information* screen, with several fields which need your input:

Name: The name of the meeting you are creating. This can be descriptive and include spaces and punctuation. This name will appear to meeting participants.

Custom URL: This is the link that you will send to your guests so they can join the meeting, so it is important that it is simple and easy to understand. The custom URL you assign will always be appended to the normal Adobe Connect login URL ('http://etsuac1.etsu.edu/THE_NAME_YOU_ENTERED_HERE'). So for my example, the URL will be http://etsuac1.etsu.edu/smith. Since URL addresses do not allow certain punctuation, avoid spaces and only use numbers and letters for this field.

Summary: An optional description of the meeting. If you send out meeting invitations from Connect then this summary will be included by default.

Start Time and Duration: Optional time limits on the meeting. These bear no functional importance with regard to your meeting; once a meeting is created it will exist unless you delete it. These times will also be added to any Connect email invitations.

Select Template: Different templates for the meeting. Templates define the default layout of a meeting when you enter it for the first time. Select the Default Meeting Template if it is not already selected. Feel free to experiment with new templates if you wish.

Language: By default this is set to English. You can choose another option if the occasion calls for it.

Access: This is a very important tab. If left on the default option ("only registered users and accepted guests may enter the room"), the meeting creator will have to manage all incoming meeting participants. This can be difficult and frustrating in the middle of managing a meeting. Since most users will not have a Connect account set up, it is important to select the 'Anyone who has the URL for the meeting can enter the room' option. This will insure that all students/faculty/staff or guests will be able to access the meeting without needing explicit confirmation.

People without the URL will not be able to enter or search for the meeting, so it remains very rare that someone not invited will stumble across it and enter without authorization.

Audio Conference: This has to do with providing information about third-party phone conference lines. Adobe Connect does not include a conference land line by default. Keep the default 'Do not include any audio conference with this meeting.' If you plan to use a conference phone line then contact ATS to configure these settings. You may also need to contact OIT if you do not already have a conference phone service set up.

Once all these fields are complete, select 'Next'.

2. Add Attendants and Set Their Role (Optional)

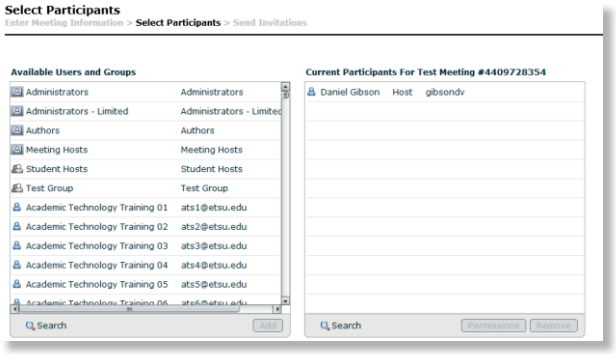


Figure 4

On this screen (*Figure 4)* you can set up other hosts or add participants from the list of registered users in the left column. If you chose the 'Anyone who has the URL for the meeting can enter the room' option from the previous screen then you do not have to make a list of registered meeting attendants. However, you can also determine user roles from here before you even enter the meeting. This can be helpful if you would like to include a co-host or presenter. To do this, simply find the person you want to include from the left column (the search button helps out a lot with that), and then click on their name and then the "Add" button at the bottom of the left column. Once someone has been added to your current participants list, you can click on their name and then assign a role to them using the "Set User Role" button at the bottom of the right column.

Once you have finished selecting participants, select the 'Next' button.

3. Send Email Invitations (Optional)

This screen will assist you in sending out email invitations to meeting participants. If you click on the "Send Invitations" button then your default email client (Microsoft Outlook) will load with a pre-loaded message including the name, summary, host, time, time zone (very important in some scenarios!), meeting URL, and connection test URL. Using this method can save you some time and include information you may not have otherwise thought to include. You can still modify the body of the message to your liking and add any participants you wish.

Select the 'Finish' button.

4. Join Your Meeting

The final screen gives you a summary of all the selections you have made, along with the URL for the meeting. Select that URL or hit the 'Enter Meeting Room' button to enter the Connect meeting.

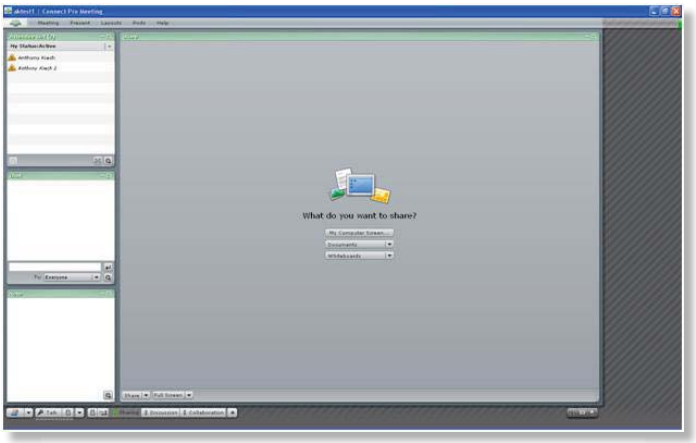


Figure 5

Using the Meeting Interface

Adobe Connect meeting spaces are made up of individual windows, called 'Pods', which each have specific features and functions. Most of what you do inside the meeting interface will have to do with these pods. Several of these pods are easy to use and fairly self-explanatory. The host can rearrange the size and positioning of the pods, and all guests in the meeting room will see those changes. For example, if a chat discussion was the focus of a meeting, it would be prudent for the host to enlarge the chat pod to fill most of the screen.

The Attendee List Pod

The Attendee List Pod shows the names of all the users who have currently joined the meeting. When users log in to a meeting, they are automatically assigned a role. If you log into a meeting which you created then you are automatically given the 'Host' role, but all others, unless otherwise indicated, will be considered 'Participants'.

Figure 6

Meeting Roles

Alongside the name of each user there is a small graphic on the left which designates that user's current role. There are three roles in Connect:

Participant — The participant role assumes that you are in the meeting to consume information, and maybe throw in the occasional comment. By default, this role only has access to view the content being shared and to offer some input in limited ways.

Presenter — This role gives you the ability to share more information, such as voice, video, and media files, without restraint, and is most suitable for an individual presenter or for a group of collaborators working and communicating together freely. Presenters can share anything, but cannot control the higher level aspects of the meeting, such as participant roles, meeting layouts, global settings, etc.

Host — The host role puts you in full control of the meeting, allowing you to access and change all available settings, and even add or remove users from the meeting.

Changing a User's Role

In the bottom left of the *Attendee List* pod is a button to change the role of any selected guests in the meeting. In this way you can allow one (or several) users to become a presenter or host. Just click on a name, or names, in the attendee list, and then click on the *Change Role* button to reassign them to another role.

Status Icons

In addition to the role icons on the left, you may also see an icon to the right of a user's name; these are status Icons. All users can change their current status with the 'My Status' pull down menu at the top of the Attendee List Pod. (The same menu is also available at the bottom of the meeting window.) Most of these status icons merely allow meeting participants to communicate quickly in a non-verbal way, however the 'Raise Hand' status actually interacts with the host of the meeting, requesting the permission to utilize a microphone. If the host accepts a raised hand request, the user who made the request will be granted microphone rights.

Other Options

In the bottom right of the pod is a pod options menu (shown as a small cog with a downward arrow) available only to the host. This menu allows you to manage user permissions, remove users, clear user statuses, invite other participants, and more.

The Chat Pod

Figure 7

The Chat pod allows participants to communicate without a microphone by typing messages which instantly appear in the chat pane. Even with a microphone available, chatting can be a good way to keep a written record of questions and answers.

To use the Chat pod, type your comments into the bottom text field. Press [ENTER] on your keyboard to display your comments in the chat pod. If you want to send a message to a specific person in the meeting room, use the 'To:' drop down menu and choose a name or group. The default is 'Everyone' meaning that all participants will see the chat.

Hosts have additional options which can be found in the bottom right of the Chat pod. These options include changing the text size, clearing the chat panel, or emailing the chat history to yourself. Changes that the host makes will be mirrored on every user's screen.

The Note Pod

The Note pod works similarly to the Chat pod, except only hosts and presenters can type messages here. Do be aware of the fact that the messages you post in the *Note* pod are broadcast to meeting participants **as you type them**, therefore you do not want to type anything you wouldn't want everyone to see.

The Share Pod

The Share Pod allows a host or presenter to share something that is on their computer screen. In the 'Meeting Template' layout we chose, the Share pod is the large pod taking up most of the right hand side of the screen.

If nothing is being shared and you are a host or presenter with the ability to share something, the pod will ask 'What do you want to share?' and will offer three choices.

Sharing Your Screen

Choosing 'My Computer Screen' from the share pod will share whatever is on your computer screen to the rest of the guests in the meeting. When you select this option, a pop-up menu appears with three choices: 'Desktop,' 'Windows,' and 'Application.' This gives you the option to choose how much you want to share. You can broadcast your entire desktop, limit what they see to one open window, or simply share an application such as Microsoft PowerPoint.

The Adobe Connect Add-In

If you have not run Connect before, you may be required to download and install an Adobe add–in to your internet browser. This is necessary for all computers which are going to share something, and is both normal and safe. It should only take a few seconds to install. If you already went through the preliminary test process then you likely already downloaded this add-in.

To stop sharing your screen, you can either 1) go back to your meeting window and click 'Stop Sharing' from the *Share Pod,* or 2) you can click on the Adobe Connect icon from your system tray and select 'Stop Sharing'.

Sharing Documents

If you select to share a document, it gives you the option to select that document from your computer, or from the content library. Images, PowerPoint slides, MP3 audio, and PDF documents can be loaded in this manner.

Depending on what kind of document you load, you will be presented with different navigation options. For example, loading a PDF document adds buttons similar to what you would find in an Adobe PDF viewer. As you navigate documents, the rest of the participants in the meeting will follow along and see what you see. You can allow everyone to navigate on their own by toggling on and off the 'Sync' button in the bottom right.

The *pointer arrow* and *whiteboard overlay* tools, available when you share visual documents, allow you to point out specific areas and make annotations atop any uploaded document.

Sharing Whiteboards

Selecting 'Whiteboard' from the *Share Pod* will open either the current whiteboard or a new blank one. The whiteboard is a collaboration tool allowing users to draw and sketch on the same white page in real time.

Sharing and Bandwidth

Sharing anything over the internet requires bandwidth, and users with slower internet connections will receive the information slower than others. Even those with high- speed internet connections will see a small delay in the host's actions. This can mean that quick changes do not get transmitted to the other viewers. For example, if you are sharing a PowerPoint presentation and quickly jump over one slide to the next, the users could easily miss that information. A good rule of thumb is to move more slowly than normal when sharing your screen with others.

The Camera and Voice Pod

All of the abilities of Connect that we have discussed so far can be used without a microphone or web-camera. However, audio and visual communication can help transmit information faster and more dynamically. If you have access to a microphone and/or PC compatible "web cam", you can activate the Camera and Voice pod.

To activate your microphone and/or camera, select the bottom left button in the *Camera and Voice Pod*. The button looks like a little camera and mic, and if you hover over it then a tooltip will popup reading "Start my camera and voice".

Figure 8

As with the *Share pod*, a small add-on will be required to share audio and video information to others. Connect will cue the user for add-in if it is not present. Simply select 'yes' to automatically download and install add-in.

Activating the Camera and Voice pod will expand the options in the bottom-left of the pod, while the pod itself transforms into a small video screen.

Often users will use the microphone without a camera. If that is the case, the video screen will be replaced by a small graphic representing that person, as shown in the example above.

The expanded options in the bottom right allow you to control when you transmit your camera and/or microphone. If the button is depressed, then they are transmitting. The 'Talk' button has a small lock feature. If the lock is off, then the microphone takes on a walkie-talkie 'push-to-talk' role. In this mode, the user will have to select the 'Talk' button each time they wish to transmit audio. By default, the lock is depressed, meaning that whenever a user speaks into the microphone, that information will automatically be sent.

Create, View and Share Meeting Recordings

Record a Meeting

Recording in Connect is a very simple task. To begin a recording, select 'Meeting' from the top menu bar and then select 'Record Meeting.' This will bring up a small dialog box with the option of naming the recording and giving it a short summary. Selecting 'OK' after this screen will begin recording the meeting.

A small red icon will appear in the top right of the Connect screen to let you know that the meeting is being recorded. To stop a recording simply place your mouse over this red icon and an option will appear to 'Stop This Recording.'

Recordings of Connect meetings are small videos compressed with the Adobe Flash codec. Once a recording is closed, it is automatically sent to the 'Recordings' section of a meeting.

View or Share a Recorded Meeting

To view or share a previously recorded meeting, the host must return to the Connect menu system. In your internet browser, go to http://etsuac1.etsu.edu and log into Connect. At the top of the screen go to 'Meetings' and then select the meeting which held the recording.

Once in the 'Meeting Information' menu, a new option will have appeared in the top called 'Recordings.' Select this to receive a list of recordings made of that meeting.

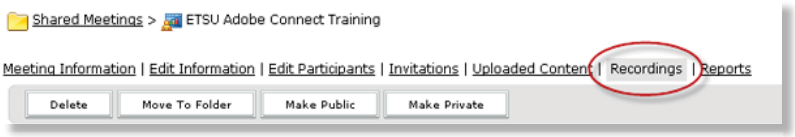

Shared Meetings > ETSU Adobe Connect Training
Meeting Information | Edit Information | Edit Participants | Invitations | Uploaded Content | Recordings | Reports
Delete
Move To Folder
Make Public
Make Private

Figure 9

Recordings are marked as private by default, which means that only the host of the meeting (generally you) can see the recording. To share the recording with others, you must make the meeting public.

To achieve this, check the small selection box next to the name of the recording you wish to make public (or that you wish to make private again).

Once selected, choose the 'Make Public' button in the silver bar at the top of the list. (Select 'Make Private' to make the video inaccessible by the public.)

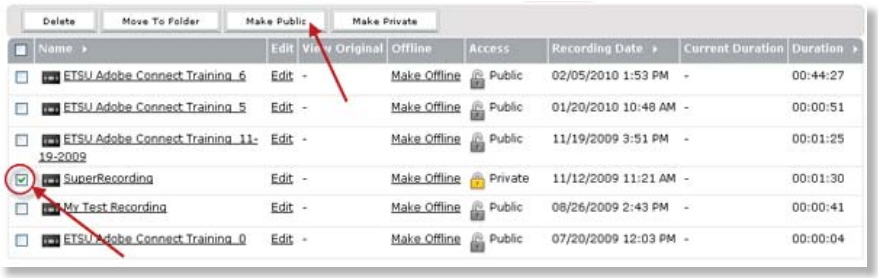

Delete
Move To Folder
Make Public
Make Private
Name
Edit
View Original
Offline
Access
Recording Date
Current Duration
Duration
ETSU Adobe Connect Training 6 Edit - Make Offline Public 02/05/2010 1:53 PM - 00:44:27
ETSU Adobe Connect Training 5 Edit - Make Offline Public 01/20/2010 10:48 AM - 00:00:51
ETSU Adobe Connect Training 11-19-2009 Edit - Make Offline Public 11/19/2009 3:51 PM - 00:01:25
SuperRecording Edit - Make Offline Private 11/12/2009 11:21 AM - 00:01:30
My Test Recording Edit - Make Offline Public 08/26/2009 2:43 PM - 00:00:41
ETSU Adobe Connect Training 0 Edit - Make Offline Public 07/20/2009 12:03 PM - 00:00:04

Figure 10

Select the individual recording name to receive a link of that particular recording. Travel to that link to view it, or share that link with others so they might do the same.

Additional Training & Support

Do you have a question or need assistance which is beyond the scope of this document? No problem! Contact the ATS office. We can schedule a one-on-one training, register you for a workshop, send someone out to help you, or just give you some over-the-phone support.

You can also check the Adobe Connect page of the ATS website, which has other training materials (documents, links, videos) and resources that may help you.

ATS Office

Sherrod Library, First Floor #118
439-8611
ats@etsu.edu